

Schoolcraft's exploring tour of 1832 /

153

SCHOOLCRAFT'S EXPLORING TOUR OF 1832. BY REV. W. T. BOUTWELL.

[Mr. B., by a kind invitation from Mr. Schoolcraft , accompanied the U. S, Exploring Expedition to Itasca Lake In 1832, See page 125. The party arrived by the way of Lake Superior. at La Pointe, on the 20th of June. For a history of the tour, the reader is referred to the following extracts from Mr. Butwell's journal.]

June 20. From the Sault to this place we have been thirteen days, but ten, however of travel. One day we lay wind-bound and the two Sabbaths we rested in obedience to the divine command. In honoring God, we feel that he has prospered us on our way. The distance from the Sault to this place, by my estimate, is about 410 miles. Some of the traders make it 456. To measure distance with any degree of accuracy in this country is a matter of much difficulty; especially if the person is but little accustomed to this mode of travelling.

June 21. It is a real New England summer's day. Have just taken a walk with brother Hall over the farm of Mr. W., the trader of this post. He has from thirty to forty acres under improvement on the island. Mr. Cadotte about two-thirds as much. The oats, barley, peas, and potatoes look well and afford the promise of a good crop. For the first time Mr. W., has planted a small piece of corn for an experiment. It appears unpromising. I think, however, the soil, which is a mixture of red clay and sand, if well manured, can be made to produce corn. The grass is suffering much for the want of rain. With industry and economy I am satisfied that most, if not all the vegetables, necessary 154 for the support of a family, can be raised here. Much land of a quality inferior to this, is cultivated in New England.

ASCENT OF THE ST. LOUIS RIVER.

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June 25. To begin this portage, which is nine miles, we are obliged to ascend a bluff sixty or seventy feet, in an angle of at least forty-five degrees. Up this steep all our baggage and the lading of two barges must be carried on the heads or backs of the men. I say heads, from the fact that a voyageur [boatman] always rests his portage collar on the head. A portage is always divided off into *poses*, or resting places, which vary in length according to the quality of the road or path, but average about half a mile. Our supplies of pork and flour are put into a shape convenient for this kind of transportation. A keg of pork, seventy pounds, and a bag of flour, eighty pounds, is considered a load; or in the dialect of the country, a *piece*, for a voyageur, both of which he takes on his back at once and ascends this bluff. This is new business for the soldiers, who are obliged to carry their own baggage and provisions. The first attempt they made to ascend with their keg of pork and bag of flour, almost every one was unsuccessful. It was not merely a matter of amusement to look at the porkegs, flour-bags, knapsacks, baggage, and men which strewed the foot of the ascent, but such as to awaken pity and prompt a helping hand. I undertook to aid one by steadying the bag of flour upon the keg of pork. But we had not proceeded far, when in spite of me, off came the flour, and rolled to the bottom of the bluff. We then both of us undertook to manage the keg, which, not without much difficulty, we succeeded in getting to the top of the bluff. We have made three poses, (a mile and a half,) and here we are overtaken by night.

June 26. At four this morning our men began their day's work. A heavy shower during the day has rendered the 155 path very bad and retarded us somewhat. Our way to-day has been over hills, across deep ravines, and some of the way through mud and water half leg deep. But notwithstanding the rain and badness of the path, the voyageurs are cheerful and prompt at their task. They carry their load half a mile, when it is thrown down and they return for another. Some of the men, to-day, have taken three bags, 240 pounds, the whole supported by a strap across the temples, the ends of which are made fast around the bags. Some of the Indian women, several of whom are assisting on the portage, have taken each a bag of flour, a trunk, and soldier's knapsack on her back, and waded

Library of Congress

through mud and water where I would not drive a dumb beast. But more, not unfrequently the Indian cradle is placed on the top of all, the hoop of which defends the child's head, projecting so high as to catch every bush, now dripping with rain, and shake it full into the child's face. As the mother cannot well leave the nursing child, it must ride both ways, so that she has not the relief of a voyageur, who takes breath in returning back for another load.

June 27. Struck our tent and renewed our march this morning at six. One of the soldiers who is disabled, a Catholic, a very profane man, saw me reading a tract, and came and asked me for one. It was but yesterday I gave him a gentle reproof.

Several families keep along in company with us, who are on their way to their summer hunting ground. The woman is often seen with all the materials on her back which makes the Indian's house, and the articles which furnish it, such as kettles, wooden-ladles, drum, traps, and axes; and on the top of all the Indian cradle, in which is bound her nursing child; while the Indian is seldom seen with more than his pipe, tobacco-sack, and musket.

About one o'clock, to-day, we reached the end of the portage. 156 The weather is very warm, and all our men and the Indians are much worn with fatigue.

Mr. S. here distributed presents to the Indians, most of whom have aided us in carrying. They all seem highly gratified with what they receive, and wholly to have forgotten the mud and water through which they have waded. Nor are the squaws neglected. After the presents were distributed, provisions were issued. The flour and meal they take, as usual, in one corner of their blanket, or a horribly dirty old cloth, which has served the place of a shirt, without ever seeing a drop of water or a bit of soap. But after all there is not so great a difference between these Indians and our voyageurs as one might suppose, for they often receive their ration of flour in their pocket-handkerchief or hat

June 28. This evening finds us at the foot of Grand Rapids. In reaching this place we ascended several strong rapids, where it required not merely all the strength, but all the

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skill of the men. Not unfrequently are they obliged to spring from the canoe into the water, in the midst of a rapid, and draw it up by hand. This is the case when the bottom is rocky and the stream shallow, which at the same time lightens the canoe in passing over the rocks. Nor is it rare for the water to dash over the bow and sides, in which case some one is sure of getting wet. No one can form an idea of the difficulty of ascending this stream, until he has made a trial of it. The scenery of to-day has been delightful. The maple, iron-wood, cedar, elm, and oak grow here in perfection.

The mosquitoes here are extremely voracious, and oblige a man constantly to fight for life. Put ashore at nine this morning, and breakfasted in their midst. Continued to ascend rapid after rapid till afternoon, when we reached what may be called the low-lands, where we found comparatively smooth water, and sufficiently deep for a steamboat. The banks here are moderately elevated; an alluvial deposit, covered with rank grass and a thrifty growth of maple, ash, elm, bass-wood, with some spruce, pine, and cedar.

An old Indian, in company with us, passing a large stone raising out of the middle of the river, left his offering of tobacco to the *menito*, or spirit. This evening we reached the mouth of the Savanna river, a stream emptying into the St. Louis. It is deep, but narrow and winding in its course, with low banks covered with wild grass. Ducks were abundant.

June 30. Reached the *Savanna*, from which the stream takes its name, a tract of low, marshy ground, overgrown with rushes, flags, and small clumps of bushes, the very nestling places of mosquitoes. At noon we reached the Savanna portage. The portage path was filled with mud and water, through which the canoes were drawn by men wading to their middle.

July 1. Sabbath. We have most of the day been obliged to house ourselves as well as we could. The rain, which has a part of the day fallen in torrents, and the mosquitoes, have rendered it impracticable for us to have divine service. It has been such a Sabbath as I never before witnessed. At one moment our men were singing some Indian hymn; the next

Library of Congress

a song or dancing tune; the next moment an Indian would begin to thump his drum and sing, that he might make his part of the noise, and render the scene of confusion more perfect. It was no small relief to me, that Mr. S. and myself, who occupied the same tent, could have prayers and spend the day in reading the Scriptures and other books which we had taken with us.

July 2. The heavy rains of Saturday night and Sabbath, have rendered the portage almost impassable. The mud, for the greater part of the way, will average an inch 158 deep, and from that upwards; in some places it is a perfect quagmire. Our men are covered with mud from head to foot. Some have lost one leg of their pantaloons, others both. Their shirts and moccasins are all of a piece, full of rents and mud. Mangled feet, and bruised backs and legs, were brought forward this evening to the doctor. While I write, his tent door is thronged with the lame and halt.—Every one carries some mark of the Savanna portage.

July 3. At eleven A. M., we embarked in what is called the western Savanna river. The stream here is barely wide and deep enough to swim our canoes. Its course, like the former, is exceedingly winding. Its banks are covered with a most luxuriant growth of wild grass, principally blue-joint, which rots on the ground. The prairie is bounded on each side by small ridges mostly of red pine. At four P. M, reached Sandy Lake, which has been estimated by some to be about twenty-five miles in circumference. It is very irregular in shape, embracing many islands and bays. It may be seven or eight miles across it, from the mouth of Savanna river to its winding outlet, which communicates with the Mississippi. Leaving the lake, we had not proceeded far, when my attention was arrested by something on the left bank, which to me was both strange and new.—I looked repeatedly, but unable to satisfy myself, asked what it was. To which Mr. S. replied, that they were coffins, and that that was the manner in which these Indians often bury their dead. Four posts are set in the ground from seven to nine feet high, by means of which a sort of scaffold is raised, and upon that, in the open air, the coffin is placed. Arriving at the trading post, we were welcomed by the discharge of muskets, and the hoisting of the American flag, by the few,

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Indians that remain. This post is about 750 miles from Mackinaw, and 140 from Fond du Lac.

Corn, for this post, is mostly obtained at Red lake, from 159 the Indians, who there cultivate it to considerable extent. Mr. R. tells me he brought 105 bushels from that place this spring; and that it is not a rare matter to meet a squaw, who has even this quantity to sell. Most of the land, in the vicinity of the post, is either low and subject to inundation, or sandy, and of comparatively little value for cultivation. Small plats of ground, however, may be selected here and there, which are good.

In going over Mr. A.'s premises this morning, among other things, I visited the Indian burying-place. This is on a rise of ground, some thirty or forty rods north of the fort. The cross, a piece of board, or a round post three feet above ground, striped with vermillion, marks the place of the dead. Some of the graves are enclosed by logs, raised a few feet and covered with cedar bark, in the form of a roof, so as to turn the water. Others are guarded by low pickets, while others are exposed to the tread of man and beast. Here lies a chief who deceased about twenty days since, not as others, under ground, but raised some eight or ten feet in the air. Four posts, stained with vermillion, support the scaffold, upon which the coffin, covered with birch bark, is placed. The American flag, which was presented to him as one of the insignia of his chieftainship, is planted at his head, there to flit in the wind till it is gone. In one of Mr. A.'s inclosures lie the remains of another chief, raised in the same manner above ground. This chief deceased some years since, and in the mean time, I am informed, the scaffold has once or twice decayed and fallen, but been again erected.

Here we embark on the Mississippi, which Lieut. A. ascertains, by actual measurement, to be 110 yards and one-third in width at this place.

160

SOURCES OF THE MISSISSIPPI.

July 5. The Mississippi here is deep, its banks low and covered with a luxuriant growth of elm, maple, ash, and cedar. For much of the distance its banks are alluvial, a rich deposit from the bed of the stream. Its course here is east or southeast. Passed Swan river this evening, sixty miles from Sandy lake. We have marched from four o'clock this morning, till half past eight this evening; and for these sixteen hours and a half, I have not been out of the canoe but once, save for breakfast. The day has passed heavily. Comfort is a term to which man is a stranger while on such a tour. But he knows full well what fatigue, heat, rain, and mosquitoes are.

July 7. At 10 A.M., reached the *Pokegema Falls* .—Wild rice first appeared just below this place. The current in some parts of the river is considerable, in others there are rapids. In ascending the rapids a short distance below these falls, our canoe was twice carried down the stream, paddles and poles notwithstanding. Happily, however, for us all, it was kept right side up. The river branches above the head of these falls and comes into the main stream again just below them, forming a small island. The whole width of the falls, I should judge, to be about twenty yards, and the whole descent about fifteen feet. We make a short portage here, perhaps two hundred and fifty yards. At twelve o'clock we left these falls, which are one hundred and fifty miles above Sandy lake; and upon embarking again, we entered the Savanna, the end of which I almost despair of ever seeing. The Mississippi here is more serpentine than can easily be imagined. Its borders are lined with wild rice, sedge, and Indian rush. The white lilly also is found here. The change in the atmosphere since yesterday, is great, from the torrid; I should think we had entered the frigid zone, and I am obliged to resort to my cloak.

161

July 8. Sabbath, Read a hymn, and portions of scripture to a few Indians who accompany us, to which they all listened attentively. I also presented a little tract to one of them, from which I read. He thanked me, and soon after, to make me some return, came with some *Pakusigon* , the leaves of a running vine, which they dry and smoke. At four, P.M.,

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collected the Indians and Frenchmen, and read, sung and prayed with them. A shower of rain interrupted me while addressing them.

Evening . A man has just arrived from Leech lake, who informs us of the return of the Pillagers from their war excursion. They met a war party of the Sioux, and both commenced the work of death. The Ojibwas lost one man, and killed three Sioux, whose scalps they brought home with rejoicing. The same person also informs us, that a party of Sioux came to the trading post at Pembina, where they scalped a child and fled. The Ojibwas pursued, overtook; and revenged themselves, by killing four of the party, Oh, how long ere these tribes shall learn war no more! It is now "an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth."

July 9. About ten this morning, reached *Point au Chene* ; soon after passing which, we left the Mississippi and entered a tributary, which takes us into a small lake ten miles in length. Leaving this we entered another stream, and came to another small lake; from this, entered another stream and came to a third lake, from which we made a short portage across a beautiful ridge of yellow pine. Here we embarked in the small Winnipeg lake, two miles in width and four in length. Crossing this from east to west, we entered the Mississippi again, and in about two hours reached large Winnipeg lake. This is a beautiful body of water, stretching from east to west fifteen or twenty miles. Here the aspect of the country again assumes a different and a 10 162 pleasing character. The eastern shore is covered with a luxuriant growth of oak and maple. The trading-post is located on the north-eastern shore, near the mouth of a considerable stream which empties into the lake. The land immediately about the post, is for the most part low, but of a good quality. The corn, peas, potatoes and squashes, all look well, also a small yard of tobacco. The soil is cultivated with ease. Dogs in this country, with the Canadian French, supply the place of oxen and horses, neither of which are possessed by the trader here. His house is made of logs, and in the manner of the country, ceiled with mud. The windows are made of deer skins in their natural state, save that the hair is taken off. These when well oiled, admit sufficient light for all the purposes of the household work which is done here. The few

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Indians present at the post, requested permission to dance this evening, as they wished for some tobacco. Two men and a few boys, with their muskets in hand, performed, while two others sang and drummed, one on a paddle-handle for the want of another drum. It was so dark that I could not well examine their ornaments, save that one had a polecat's tail hung on each side, and a head-dress falling behind, covering nearly all his otherwise naked back. They were much animated when the tobacco was thrown into their midst, each raising the yell at the same time, and clapping the mouth with the hand.

UPPER RED CEDAR LAKE.

July 10. Reached Upper Red Cedar, or Cassina lake. This latter name it receives from Governor Cass , who visited it in 1820. Two branches of the Mississippi enter into this lake. The Indians residing here, being aware of our approach, came to meet us, firing salutes of musketry. Their summer village, they informed us, was on an island about ten miles distant.

163

As we approached this island from the northeast, which overlooks the lake by a high bluff, rising some sixty or more feet above the water, almost the first object that caught my eye, was a fine field of corn, potatoes, and squashes, growing luxuriantly. The next I knew was a discharge of muskets kern amid the standing corn. We were directed to make the west side of the island, where we should find a good landing, and a place for encampment. In the mean time, one continual hooting, yelling, and firing was kept up behind the bushes which lined the shore. On disembarking, I found a musket in the hand of almost every little Indian boy, many of whom following the example of their fathers, came forward and took us by the hand. All bid us welcome, and seemed overjoyed that their father has come to see his children.

Evening . While our canoes were unlading, tent erecting, &c., I took a walk to see the field of corn in the northern extremity of the island, which we passed. But ere I had reached it, I

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passed no less than two or three other little fields, all of which remind me of New England, where I never saw better, corn, squashes, or potatoes, than I find here with Indian culture. The growth of wood and timber on this part of the island, is entirely destroyed; save here and there a large oak or maple. All the high land is covered with rank grass and sumach, except the plats here and there under cultivation.

The soil is easy to work with a hoe, the only tool with which the squaw makes her garden. I say *squaw*, from the fact that she always makes the garden, inasmuch as the Indian deems it degrading to himself to use the hoe or axe. I next visited the lodges, Which were about half a mile south from our encampment. Here I found another piece of corn, potatoes and squashes. While our party, were procuring some small canoes suitable for our route to Elk Lake, I went 164 into one of the lodges, read several portions of Scripture; among others the ten commandments, and sang several Indian hymns. All listened with apparent interest and surprise. As I had not an interpreter, I was unable to communicate much more than to read such portions of Scripture and hymns, as were familiar to me. In the lodge, directly before me, were suspended three human scalps. These were the trophies of victory with which they had just returned from the Sioux. Several of the warriors of this band, joined the Leech lake band in the recent excursion, and the Indian who was killed, belonged here.

Before I had returned to our tent, which is pitched but a few yards from two graves, the greater part of the Indians had here collected, and begun the scalp-dance. It was led by three squaws, each bearing in her hand one of the recent scalps. Two or three men sat beating drums and singing, while old and young, male and female, all joined in the song. Occasionally all would become so animated that there would be one general hop, and all at the same time, throwing their heads back, would raise a most horrid yell, clapping the mouth with the hand, to render it, if possible, more terrific. Here were seen little boys and girls, not six years old, all looking on with the most, intense interest, imitating their fathers and mothers, and participating in their brutal joy. Thus early do they learn by precept and example, to imbibe the spirit of revenge and war, which is fostered in their bosoms, and

Library of Congress

in after life stimulates them to go and perform some deed of daring and blood, which shall gain for themselves the like applause.

A circumstance which rendered the scene not a little appalling, is, it was performed around the graves of the dead. At the head of those graves, hangs an old scalp, some ten feet above the ground, which the winds have almost divested of its ornaments and its hair. The grass and the turf for 165 several yards around, are literally destroyed, and I presume, by their frequent dancing. One of the scalps, I examined. The flesh side had apparently been smoked and rubbed with some material till it was pliant, after which it was painted with vermillion. A piece of wood is turned in the form of a horse-shoe, into which the scalp is sewed, the threads passing round the wood, which keeps it tight. Narrow pieces of cloth and ribands of various colors, attached to the bow, were ornamented with beads and feathers. A small stick, which serves for a handle to shake it in the air when they dance, was attached to the top of the bow by a string.—While examining it, a lock of hair fell from it, which the Indian gave me and which I still preserve.

MARCH TO ELK LAKE.

July 13. Commenced our march this morning, at six, and continued till nine. The weather is warm and sultry, and the mosquitoes more numerous and savage than can be imagined. We now leave this branch of the MissisSippi and make a portage of six miles, when I hope to see the highest source of the river. At eleven A. M., took our effects on our backs, and entered a swamp, leaving which, we came to a ridge of small grey pines which we followed most of the remainder of the distance, and at two P. M., reached Elk lake.* This is a small but beautiful body of water, about eight miles in length and from half a mile to two or more in breadth. Its form is exceedingly irregular, from which the Indians gave it the name of Elk, in reference to its branching horns. The distance from upper Red Cedar lake by the southeast fork, is about one hundred and twenty miles.

* Elk lake now called Ilasca, is regarded as the highest source of the Mississippi river.

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July 14. Embarked at half past five, and descended two 166 or three strong and difficult rapids. In one of them a canoe was capsized, and all the men and their effects were thrown into the midst of the rapids. Hearing an outcry, I turned to see what was the matter, when the first I saw was a keg of pork, bounding down the rapids over the stones With one head out. The next was a loaf of bread, which the Indian in my canoe took in with his spear. Nothing can exceed the grandeur and pleasure of the scene, in descending a large stream in one of these small canoes, when the current is strong, and the water smooth. The canoe is borne on, not only with all the rapidity of the current, but when the paddles are applied, its speed is like that of a race horse.

This afternoon passed the Sioux embankment. This consists of two considerable cavities in the earth, sufficient to conceal thirty men. They are so situated on the bank of the river, as just to overlook a bend, which is the commencement of a considerable rapid. Here, I am informed, a party of Sioux once entrenched themselves, and killed a large number of the Ojibwas as they were descending the river.—When they once entered the rapids, there was no escape.

RETURN TO UPPER RED CEDAR LAKE.

July 15. Sabbath. Reached the island early this morning, having marched all night. Find all our men well, and much recruited by resting four days, during our absence. The party that have accompanied us, are so much fatigued by our tour to Elk lake, that it is thought best to defer our service in English, while I devote what time and strength I have to the Indians. Retired in the morning with the three pious soldiers, and spent an hour in prayer and conversation. I find them all much depressed. I read to some of the Indians who came to our tent this forenoon. In the afternoon collected about seventy Indians or more, all of 167 whom listened with apparent interest and good attention to the word of God, and most of them for the first time. Our place of assembling was near the graves, before mentioned, on the ground where the horrid scalp-dance is often exhibited. Never did I witness a more interesting, respectful, and attentive Indian audience. Mr. J. read to them the account of

Library of Congress

the creation and flood, after which I read the ten commandments from which I made some remarks, and informed them of the object of my visit. The inquiry was put to the principal man, the chief being absent, "Would you like to have a missionary come and live with you, instruct your children, and tell you about God?" To which he replied, "Neither myself nor any one present can answer the inquiry, as the chief is absent, and many of the young men are very vicious."

As we assembled for our worship, five or six Indians were sitting near, engaged in a game of platter, which was soon left. Not long after our meeting closed, the dance began and continued without cessation, till eleven o'clock. I learned from some of the men who remained, that the Indians danced almost day and night during our absence. I am also informed that three canoes from Leech lake passed here yesterday, on their way to Red lake, to carry the wampum and the pipe to invite that band to join them in another war party, to revenge the death of the Indian who was killed in their late excursion.

I much regret that I must leave this country without seeing the chief. The land is capable of raising corn, and I presume, wheat, barley, and rye. The first is already cultivated to a considerable extent. This band has no very distinguished *medicine man*, or conjurer among them, whose influence is much to be feared. One would think, in looking at their growing corn, potatoes, &c., that they are already far advanced in the arts of civilized life. One requested a 168 few beans to plant next year. Another, asked for a little salt, and in return, brought us some very fine potatoes, which were not merely a rarity to us, but a curiosity here at this advanced season. They obtained the corn, which they have cultivated here many years, from Red river. The island is large and in the form of a cross. The lake is a large body of water, and affords many fish. Much wild rice also, is gathered in the vicinity. The only water communication is with the Mississippi river. The distance to Sandy lake is three hundred and fifty or four hundred miles; and to the Falls of St. Anthony the distance is from six hundred and fifty to eight hundred miles.

LEECH LAKE.

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July 16. At 10, A. M., we took leave of our Indian friends here, and in a southeast course proceeded to Leech Lake, passing a number of islands in our way, on which red cedar is found, from which the lake takes its name. We made two short portages, and came to small lakes which we traversed, passing through their outlets, till we reached a large stream, which bore us to Leech Lake. than which nothing can be more irregular in shape. We reached the Indian village, at ten in the evening, a distance of forty-five or fifty miles.

July 17. At day-break my slumbers were broken by the discharge of muskets and the yell of Indians, who had collected to give us a morning salute. On going to the door of the tent, I was not a little surprised to find a field of corn and potatoes at our heads, which was not discovered last evening amid the darkness. Early this morning the principal chief sent his *mishiniue* , waiting-man, requesting Mr. S. to come and breakfast with him. Decorum, and to avoid giving offense, required him to comply with the request, though he was at liberty to furnish the table mostly himself. 169 A mat spread in the middle of the floor served as a table, upon which the dishes were placed. Around this were spread others upon which the guests sat, while the wife of the chief waited upon the table and poured the tea, She afterwards took her breakfast by herself. After breakfast was over, Mr. J. accompanied us to the chief's quarters to give us an introduction. It is a building. perhaps twenty feet by twenty-five, made of logs, and which, I am informed, was presented him by one of the traders. As we entered, the old chief, bare-legged and bare-foot, sat with much dignity upon a cassette. A blanket and cloth about the loins covered his otherwise naked body, which was painted black. His chief men occupied a bench by his side, while forty or more of his warriors sat on the floor around the walls of his room smoking. The old man rose and gave us his hand as we were introduced, bidding us to take a seat at his right, on his bed. As I cast my eyes around upon this savage group, for once I wished that I possessed the painter's skill. The old chief had again resumed his seat upon the large wooden trunk, and as if to sit a little more like a white man than an Indian, had thrown one leg across the other knee. His warriors were all feathered, painted, and equipped for service. Many of them wore the insignia of courage, a strip of pole-cat skin round the head and heels,

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the bushy tail of the animal so attached to the latter as to drag on the ground. The crown of the head was ornamented with standing feathers, indicating the number of enemies the individual had killed, on one of which I counted no less than twelve. Their look was full of wildness, such as I never saw before, combining the fierceness of the tiger with the boldness of the lion.

One side of his room was hung with an English and an American flag, medals, war-clubs, lances, tomahawks, arrows, 170 and other implements of death. All seemed to whisper, this is the dwelling of the strong man armed. The subject of vaccination was now presented to the chief, with which he was pleased, and ordered his people to assemble for the purpose. I stood by the doctor and kept the minutes, while he performed the business.

After the presents had been distributed, Mr. S., wishing to reach the mouth of the Des Corbeau in season to fulfill his engagement there, requested me to address the Indians on the subject of my visit. They all listened attentively while I related to them what the Christian public are doing for their people in Canada, at the Sault Ste Marie, and at La Pointe, and also what is doing for the Seneca, Oneida, and Stockbridge Indians. I assured them of the interest felt for them as a people, and that their friends were ready to do something for them in the way of instructing their children, if they wished.

Preparations were now making for taking our leave, when the chief arose and announced to the Indians that he would speak a few words, as we should be displeased if he did not. Giving his hand again to each, he addressed himself to Mr. S. After the old chief closed his speech, he requested a white shirt of Mr. S. and some other things, (I say white, because so seldom seen in this country,) that he might lay aside his mourning. Just, as we were ready to embark, the old man came out in all his regimentals—a military coat, faced with red, ruffle shirt, hat, pantaloons, gloves and shoes. So entirely changed was his appearance, that I did not recognize him till he spoke.

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This band is considered the largest, and perhaps the most warlike in the whole Ojibwa nation. It numbers 706, exclusive of a small band, probably 100, on Bear Island, one of the numerous islands in this lake; but the reason of their not being numbered with the Leech Lake band the old chief 171 did not give. This lake abounds with fish of a fine quality. Wild rice is also gathered in its bays in considerable quantities. Fish and rice here are the principal means of subsistence, though the Indians, to some extent, cultivate the land. This band have eight places where they cultivate the ground and pass some part of the spring and summer. The numbers, location, and means, of subsistence, give this place advantages superior to any I have yet seen, if a missionary could live among these savage men. It is situated in the neighborhood, (as it would be termed in this country,) of Upper Red Cedar or Cassina band, Winnipeg band, which are each but forty-five or fifty miles distant; of Red Lake band about, three days march distant, and Sandy Lake about the same. It is central in relation to these neighboring bands, with each of which they have frequent intercourse at all seasons of the year.

RETURN TO THE MISSISSIPPI.

July 18. While prosecuting our journey this afternoon, the old chief and one of his counsellors, Machi Gabo , with their wives, overtook us. He appeared more friendly to our government than his speech indicated yesterday. He came to see how we were getting along without guides, who, as we did not tarry this morning for them to come to our place of encampment, probably turned back. We have crossed five short portages to-day, the longest of which is nearly two miles, and the shortest, one *pose* , or half a mile. The number of lakes we have crossed is nine, some of which are separated only by a narrow stream of a few yards in length. This, I am informed, is the character of the country in this region. In what way soever you go, you are sure soon to fall upon a small lake.

July 21. At 12 o'clock, reached the mouth of the Des Corbeau, a large stream, three days from Leech Lake—distance 172 230 miles. Here we found the Sandy Lake band, who were absent when we visited that place. They had sent two canoes up the river a few

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miles, to meet us and give them a signal of our approach. All were encamped on the high banks of the Mississippi, which for several rods was completely lined with their bark canoes and wigwams, near which four or five American flags were hoisted. As we drew near to disembark, all collected on the high bluff directly above us, and commenced their discharge of muskets, their jumping and yelling, while the frightened dogs added what they could to the scene of confusion. Hardly were our tents pitched ere the canoe from Sandy Lake arrived with the presents which Mr. S. left there for this band. These were issued, and Mr. S. addressed the chiefs on the subject of their keeping the peace with their neighbors the Sioux. The chiefs, in reply, reminded him of the treaty at Prairie du Chien and at Fon du Lac. "The promise of the Great Father," they said, "had not been fulfilled. Their neighbors already called them women and not men, because they sat still; and if a war party should come along, or if they should send them the pipe, they did not know how they should act."

While issuing the presents and counselling with the Indians, two or three men came in from an excursion, with three bears on their shoulders. They made us a present of some of the meat as we left. It was now quite late, and we wished to descend the Mississippi about eighteen miles, to pass the Sabbath. Mr. S., therefore, invited the Indians to accompany us, or to come in the morning, as I wished to say some things to them, which I had not time now to communicate.

July 23. The gentleman engaged in the fur-trade at this place speaks well of this band of Indians, and is desirous of a school at or near his post, offering to do all in his power to aid, in case a person is sent here. This is the hunting ground, both summer and winter, for the Sandy Lake band, and it is in this vicinity, also, that they make their gardens. The disposition of the band also is pacific, compared with that of all the other bands northwest. In addition to all, the soil here is of a fine quality, prairie land, ready for the spade or plough. The place, however, is contiguous to the Sioux country, with whom the Ojibwas are now at war, and might on that account be unsafe for a mission school.

DESCENT OF THE MISSISSIPPI—FORT SNELLING.

Embarked at six, A. M., and commenced our descent of the Mississippi. The east bank is generally high, rising in many places to a bluff, while the west, at the same time, is low and alluvial. The current is strong, amounting to rapids almost every few miles. At eight we reached the Little Falls. Instead of making a short portage here as is usual, the water being sufficiently high to clear the canoe from stones, we only put into the current and let her drive. The stream is full of small islands, many of which are covered with a beautiful growth of elm, maple, butternut, and white walnut. The country here is prairie, extending as far as the eye can reach, with here and there a clump of oaks, which at a distance looks like some old New England orchard. It is the most interesting and inviting tract of country I have ever seen. If there is anything that can meet the wishes, and fill the soul of man with gratitude, it is found here. What would require the labor of years, in preparing the land for cultivation in many of the old states, is here all prepared to the hand. As far as the eye can reach, is one continued field of grass and flowers, waving in the passing breeze, exhibiting the appearance of a country which 174 has been cultivated for centuries, but now deserted of its inhabitants. The gentle swells, which are seen here and there, give a pleasing variety. The soil is apparently easy of cultivation, a black earth and a mixture of black sand. Nothing can be more picturesque or grand, than the high banks at a distance, rising before you as you descend. The islands in the stream are most of them alluvial, a soil of the richest quality.

We have marched thirteen hours and a half to-day, at the rate of ten miles per hour, and are encamped this evening in the dominions of the Sioux, though we have as yet seen none.

July 25. Embarked at five this morning, and marched till twelve, when we reached the falls of St. Anthony, nine miles above the mouth of the St. Peter's. Our government have here a saw-mill and grist-mill on the west bank of the Mississippi, and also have a large farm. The soldiers are here cutting the hay. For beauty, the country around exceeds all that I can

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say. These falls are an interesting object to look at, but there is nothing about them that fills one with awe, as do the falls of Niagara. The stream is divided in about its centre by a bluff of rocks covered with a few trees. The perpendicular fall is perhaps twenty feet on each side of this bluff, at the foot of which there is a shoot of some ten or fifteen feet more in a descent.

A short portage was made around the falls, when we again embarked in the rapids, and in about an hour reached Fort Snelling. This post is located at the junction of the St. Peter's with the Mississippi. It stands on a high bluff, rising on the north nearly 300 feet above the water. The walls of the fort, and of most of the buildings, are of stone. The tower commands an extensive and beautiful view of the adjacent country, and of the Mississippi and St. Peter's rivers. 175 The officers visited us at our tents, invited us to their quarters, and treated us with much kindness and attention.

After Mr. S. had stated to three or four of the principal Sioux chiefs who had been requested to visit him, the object of his tour, and mentioned the complaints which the Ojibwas brought against them for breaking the treaties of Prairie du Chien and Foil du Lac, Little Crow rose and replied, that he recollected those treaties, when they smoked the pipe, and all agreed to eat and drink out of the same dish. He wished the line to be drawn between them and the Ojibwas; the sooner it was fixed the better. He alluded to the late war party from Leech lake, which had killed two of his nephews, and were now dancing around their scalps; but he did not complain, nor would he go and revenge their death. He denied that the Sioux were in league with the Sacs and Foxes. Black Dog , and the Man-who-floats-on the water , also spoke in much the same manner.

RETURN TO LAKE SUPERIOR.

July 26. Took leave of our friends here this morning, and descended about nine miles, when we came to Little Crow's village. Here we were received with a salute, in giving which, however, some of his men endeavored to give us an example of their skill as

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marksmen, by seeing how near they could come to our canoe and yet not hit it. Several of the balls struck the water within a few feet of us. An Indian always puts in a ball, if he has one, in firing a salute. The Sioux have here a number of comfortable dwellings made of poles covered with bark. They raise corn, potatoes, etc. The Mississippi here loses its prairie character, and its banks become thinly wooded. The east Shore; in many places, is rocky, and covered with red cedar. At three, P. M., entered St. Croix lake, from which we are to enter the St. Croix 176 river, which we are to ascend on our return to Lake Superior.

July 31. We embarked at five this morning, and at ten reached the mouth of Yellow river, which communicates with Ottawa lake. Here we found a few Indians. A woman brought us a bowl of new potatoes, and a pan of dried venison. The potatoes were an unexpected rarity. The venison was first dried or smoked, and then pulverized in a mortar. The Indians here raise corn, potatoes, and squashes in considerable quantities. In fifteen miles we came to the forks of the St. Croix.

August 1. Wild rice looks beautifully on the margin of the river as we ascend. The bend of the stream is completely paved with stones, and we have rapid upon rapid since leaving the forks. For miles our men have been obliged to wade in the stream and lift the canoe over the rocks, while we are glad to find our way as we can, sometimes times in the middle of the stream, and sometimes on the shore.